



MUSEO DELLA ROCCA
MALATESTIANA DI
MONTEFIORE
CONCA

MONTEFIORE ROCCA BUSTRENGO

We looked around a bit to find recipes linked to our archaeological finds. Let's say it was like doing the shopping in the "waste pits" and then looking for a recipe with the same ingredients. How do you find 14th to 17th century recipes? Now there are some rare recipe books such as an "Anonymous Tuscan" or an "Anonymous Venetian" or authors such as Master Martin of Como for the court of the popes in Rome or Messisbugo from the Court of Ferrara, which provide a reliable source of information. Then there are also paintings dating back to the early 14th century, such as the Last Suppers by the Master of the Refectory of Pomposa and by Giovanni Barozio in the polyptych preserved at Urbino in the National Gallery of the Marches, or the Wedding at Cana by the Master of Tolentino in the chapel of St. Nicholas, the Banquet of Herod by the Master of the Life of the Baptist preserved today in New York, or the Birth of the Baptist by the Master of the Urbino Coronation and the dinner of Abbot Guido also by the Master of the Pomposa Refectory. These provide direct depictions of certain foods, tableware and table manners. Another way is to examine the accounting books in which purchases were recorded, or classifications of what was produced in local areas, or chronicles of banquets and inventories, or the magnificent "Ruralia Commoda" a 14th century book on agriculture conserved in the Malatestiana library at Cesena, or by taking a look inside traditional dishes with deep roots in the area that is being studied. So from that single black fig preserved in the "waste pits" because it was burnt, we thought of a dish with a name probably of barbarian origin, "Bustreng" an exquisite poor dessert. Its origin is claimed by both Lower Romagna and the Upper Marche.

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Bustrengo has its roots in the traditions of the first desserts that started by mixing dry or dried fruit into a bread dough and with the need to recycle bread and other ingredients, a desert which empties the pantry of all those ingredients. It has many variants in which eggs and milk and old bread, flours of different qualities, lemon and orange peel, apples and dry and dried fruit appear as a base, but then everything else mixes in until there are twenty or more ingredients. The flour that seemed best for our Rocca recipe is that of chestnuts, widely used in the Conca and Marecchia valleys and this is borne out by an important festival that still today fills the streets of the village of Montefiore in autumn. If you would like to taste the “Bustrengo” desert we used to reproduce a Rocca di Montefiore banquet, here is the recipe.

Recipe

100 g chestnut flour

100 g white flour

100 g boiled barley

100 g old bread

200 g honey

3 eggs

half a litre of milk

200 g mixed nuts and hazelnuts, chopped figs, prunes and dried apricots and sultanas

2 apples peeled and chopped

1 grated lemon peel and 1 grated orange peel

1 teaspoon of salt

half a glass of extra virgin olive oil



Soak the bread in milk and then mix all the ingredients together. Grease a baking tin with oil and sprinkle with flour, pour in the mixture and bake at 180 degrees for about half an hour.

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